

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9210

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 1640/1

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DEPARTMENT FOR THE SECRETARY, HABIB AND HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP (CLIFFORD, CLARK M.)
SUBJECT: CLIFFORD MISSION: REPORT ON THE FIRST LEG OF MISSION

1. SECRETARY CLIFFORD ASKS THAT THE FOLLOWING REPORT BE
PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT.

BEGIN TEXT.

2. THIS CONSTITUTES A SUMMARY REPORT FROM CLARK CLIFFORD TO
THE PRESIDENT CONCERNING THE FIRST LEG OF HIS MISSION TO THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

3. CLIFFORD MET IN VIENNA ON FEBRUARY 17 WITH SECRETARY GENERAL
WALDHEIM IN GOOD MEETING. WALDHEIM GAVE FULL REPORT ON
MARARIOS-DENKTASH MEETING, EXPRESSING CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM
BASED ON APPARENT WILLINGNESS OF PARTIES TO DISCUSS ISSUES.
WALDHEIM WELCOMED US HELP, NOTING US INFLUENCE IN ANKARA.
CLIFFORD STRESSED UN LEAD IN THIS MATTER AND WILLINGNESS OF
US TO SUPPORT HIS EFFORTS.

4. CLIFFORD MET WITH CHANCELLOR KREISKY AND CONVEYED
PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REGARDS AND THANKS FOR AUSTRIA'S BI-
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CENTENNIAL GIFT TO US (PROFESSORSHIPS IN AUSTRIAN HISTORY AT
STANFORD AND UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA). KREISKY SPOKE MOSTLY
ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST WHERE HE BELIEVES THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR
SETTLEMENT OTHERWISE LESS MODERATE ARAB LEADERS WILL EMERGE
IN PLO AND ARAB NATIONS.

5. IN ATHENS, CLIFFORD FIRST PAID COURTESY CALLS ON PRESIDENT

TSATSOS AND PRIME MINISTER KARAMANLIS, DELIVERING PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTERS, WHICH WERE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY POSITIVE, GIVEN THE GREAT UN-POPULARITY OF US IN GREECE DURING LAST FEW YEARS. LONG SUB-STANTIVE MEETINGS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER TOP OFFICIALS WENT EXTREMELY WELL.

6. THE GREEKS PRESENTED THEIR POSITIONS CLEARLY AND WITH GREAT FORCE. THESE POSITIONS WERE NOT UNLIKE THOSE EXPRESSED IN THE PAST, BUT THERE WAS A NEW SENSE OF URGENCY AND PESSIMISM, ESPECIALLY IN THE WAY PRIME MINISTER KARAMANLIS OUTLINED HIS CURRENT PROBLEMS. GREEK LEADERS CLEARLY APPRECIATED THE CHANGE TO PRESENT THEIR VIEWS TO THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL EMISSARY.

7. THE MAJOR IMPRESSION THE GREEKS WANTED US TO HAVE WAS THAT TURKEY HAD BECOME OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS A FUNDAMENTALLY EXPANSIONIST POWER, AND THAT TURKISH EXPANSIONISM WAS AIMED DIRECTLY AT GREECE. THE GREEKS CITED AS EVIDENCE OF THIS

(A) TURKEY'S SECOND OFFENSIVE IN CYPRUS IN AUGUST 1974, AND TURKISH FAILURE TO NEGOTIATE IN CYPRUS IN GOOD FAITH ON THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE.

(B) DISPUTES RELATING TO THE AIR ZONE OVER THE AEGEAN.

(C) DISPUTES OVER THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF.

(D) OTHER SO-CALLED TURKISH PROVOCATIVE ACTS AND STATEMENTS.

8. IN ALL THEIR PRESENTATIONS, THE GREEKS STRESSED THAT THE FAULTS FOR ALL THEIR CURRENT PROBLEMS LAY WITH TURKEY. THE GREEKS INSISTED THEY WERE MODERATE AND CONCILIATORY, READY
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FOR NEGOTIATIONS AND COMPROMISE. ALL PROGRESS, HOWEVER, WAS BLOCKED BECAUSE OF TURKEY'S BASICALLY EXPANSIONIST ORIENTATION. THUS, THERE WAS AN AIR OF PESSIMISM IN EVERY POSITION. THE PRIME MINISTER STATED WITH THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS THAT HE WOULD NO LONGER BE ABLE TO FOLLOW A POLICY OF MODERATION REGARDING TURKISH PROVOCATIONS. HE STATED THAT GREECE COULD BE HUMILIATED NO LONGER BECAUSE THE GREEK PEOPLE WOULD NOT STAND FOR IT. AS AN ILLUSTRATION, HE STATED FLATLY THAT IF THE TURKS SENT OUT AN EXPLORATORY SHIP AGAIN, GREECE COULD NO LONGER RELY ON DIPLOMACY. WITH CONSIDERABLE EMOTION HE INFORMED US THAT THE CONTINUANCE OF THE PRESENT TURKISH ATTITUDE, IN HIS OPINION, WOULD LEAD TO WAR BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

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9. WITH REFERENCE TO INDIVIDUAL ISSUES, THE GREEK POSITIONS
CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) WE REQUESTED THE GREEKS TO SET A DATE FOR RESUMPTION
OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS. AT FORMAL MEETINGS THEY WERE EVASIVE.
HOWEVER, AT OUR FINAL LUNCH, THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT
THE PRIME MINISTER HAD AGREED TO OUR REQUEST. HE INDICATED
AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THIS EFFECT WILL NOT BE MADE UNTIL AFTER
THE CLIFFORD PARTY LEAVES, OSTENSIBLY BECAUSE OF GREEK DOMESTIC
SENSITIVITIES, BUT ALSO POSSIBLY BECAUSE THE GREEKS ARE WAITING
TO SEE WHAT POSITION THE CLIFFORD PARTY WILL TAKE WITH RESPECT
TO THE TURKISH DCA. WE AGREED TO A DELAY IN THE GREEK ANNOUNCEMENT,
AND WE EXPECT THE NEGOTIATIONS TO RESUME EITHER IN WASHINGTON
OR ATHENS ON OR ABOUT MARCH 15.

(B) WHILE GREEK OFFICIALS ASKNOLEDGED THAT THE POSITION
ON THE TURKISH DCA WAS FULLY A MATTER SOLELY FOR THE US TO
DECIDE, BOTH KARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS EXPRESSED A "PRIVATE" VIEW
THAT US MILITARY AID TO TURKEY SHOULD NOT BE RESUMED UNTIL AFTER
A SETTLEMENT OF BOTH THE CYPRUS ISSUE AND GREEK-TURKISH DIF-
FICULTIES IN THE AEGEAN. THIS LATTER CONDITION, WHICH WOULD LINK
THE RESUMPTION OF TURKISH MILITARY AID TO RESOLUTION OF THE
AEGEAN PROBLEM, CONSTITUTES A NEW AND MORE RIGID GREEK POSITION.
THE GREEKS DID SUGGEST THAT BOTH BASE AGREEMENTS MIGHT BE COM-
PLETED AND RATIFIED, BUT THAT THE RESPECTIVE AID PACKAGES SHOULD
BE SEPARATED FROM THE GENERAL DOCUMENTS.

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(C) WITH RESPECT TO NATO, THE GREEKS INDICATED THEY WERE
IN FAVOR OF THE ALLIANCE AND WANTED TO MOVE BACK TOWARDS FULL
MEMBERSHIP. BUT UNTIL THERE WAS PROGRESS ON CYPRUS AND THE AEGEAN,
THIS RE-ENTRY WOULD HAVE TO TAKE A SLOW AND MEASURED PACE,
AND THEREFORE HAD TO BE ORGANIZED ON THE BASIS OF A SPECIAL

RELATIONSHIP.

(C) THE GREEKS REFRAINED FROM GIVING AN INDICATION OF HOW THE US MIGHT BE OF ASSISTANCE IN FACILITATING A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT, ALTHOUGHT WE PUT THE QUESTION DIRECTLY SEVERAL TIMES. THE GREEKS MADE CLEAR THAT THEY THEMSELVES COULD NOT ADOPT AN ACTIVE ROLE AT PRESENT, BUT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE HELPFUL BEHIND THE SCENES. THE GREEKS MAINTAINED THAT MAKARIOS WAS NOW REASONABLE AND WANTED TO NEGOTIATE AND THAT THEREFORE OUR MOST IMPORTANT SERVICE WOULD BE TO PRESS THE TURKS TO MAKE A REASONABLE TERRITORIAL PROPOSAL. THE GREEKS, HOWEVER, WERE NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR FORTHCOMING INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS IN VIENNA IN MARCH.

10. THE GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED THAT THE KISSINGER LETTER OF APRIL 10, 1976, WHICH THE GREEKS SEE AS A MILD FORM OF SECURITY GUARANTEE AGAINST TURKISH ACTIONS IN THE AEGEAN, BE REISSUED BY SECRETARY VANCE AND, IF POSSIBLE, STRENGTHENED TO PROVIDE ASSURANCES AGAINST PROVOCATIONS BY EITHER SIDE.

11. CLIFFORD AND PARTY LISTENED TO GREEK PRESENTATION, ASKED QUESTIONS BUT MADE NO COMMITMENTS, EXCEPT TO TAKE BACK THEIR VIEWS TO WASHINGTON, AND TO CONSIDER THEM CAREFULLY IN THE GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW OF POLICIES IN THIS AREA. CLIFFORD EXPRESSED VIEW THAT US WISHES TO PROMOTE A STRONG NATO, GOOD US RELATIONS WITH BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY AND TO HELP GREECE AND TURKEY RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES.

12. GREEK LEADERS EXPRESSED THROUGHOUT THEIR PRESENTATIONS STRONG FEARS OF TURKISH INTENTIONS, INCLUDING POSSIBLE ULTIMATE
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THREATS AGAINST THE GREEK ISLANDS IN THE AEGEAN. AT THE SAME TIME THE GREEKS, WHILE INSISTING THEY WERE MODERATE, SEEMED TO HAVE NO IDEA AS TO HOW THEY MIGHT RESOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS WITH TURKEY THEMSELVES. WHILE TALKING OF FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS THEY APPEARED TO HAVE NO PLAN AS TO HOW TO PROCEED AND THEY SEEM TO HAVE PREPARED NO SUBSTANTIVE PROPOSALS OF THEIR OWN, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO THE AEGEAN QUESTION WHICH THEY CLAIM IS THE MOST DANGEROUS.

13. GREEK MODERATION INDEED APPEARS BASED ON A REALIZATION OF GREECE'S FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESSES VIS-A-VIS TURKEY. NONETHELESS, THE PRIME MINISTER EMPHASIZED THAT HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES MIGHT OCCUR AND THAT HE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO RESTRAIN THE GREEK MILITARY AND POPULACE IF WHAT GREEKS FEAR IS TURKISH PROVOCATION CONTINUES (SUCH AS SEISMIC RESEARCH OPERATIONS BY THE TURKS IN THE AEGEAN THIS SPRING AND SUMMER).

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